

OFFICE OF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES
2009 PROGRESS REPORT
October 2008 to September 2009

Introduction

The Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) uses program performance measures (PPMs) as the yardstick to measure progress towards its strategic goals and objectives as prescribed through the National Marine Sanctuaries Act and related authorities. Seven performance measures have been tracked by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) using the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) since 2004, in order to gain an understanding of the efficacy and efficiency of the ONMS. Of these seven, the first four are considered “outcome performance measures”, i.e., measures that show how the efforts of the ONMS can result in real change in the environment per the ONMS’s mandate. In addition, the ONMS is tracking performance of several program areas not represented in the PART performance measures, such as operations efficiency, marine zone monitoring and volunteer efforts in order to capture performance information from a broader spectrum of ONMS activities. Together, these performance measures offer a mechanism for assessing the fulfillment of our mandate in the NMSA.

This progress report gives the ONMS a means to internally assess its own progress and to provide external audiences (e.g., the budget offices of the National Ocean Service (NOS), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Department of Commerce (DOC), respectively, or the OMB) with the most current and detailed ONMS performance data. This is the fourth annual report published by the ONMS on this topic; therefore, it not only provides a snapshot of the current performance of the ONMS, but it also shows the progress made by the ONMS since 2006. Three of the four outcome performance measures track the progress of the ONMS in maintaining water quality, habitat and living marine resources in all sanctuaries, and directly show how the ONMS is meeting its mandate of resource protection, as described in the National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA). The progress report also assists the ONMS in internal prioritizing of activities and supports targeting of scarce funding resources. In addition, it can be used as a messaging tool to inform various stakeholders, including Sanctuary Advisory Councils, on the efficacy of the ONMS.

This report focuses on the ONMS efforts made in fiscal year 2009 (October 2008-September 2009). Since the new Administration has not yet provided guidance on how it will require federal agencies to track performance, there is currently no requirement for the ONMS to produce a report. However, the ONMS believes that tracking performance consistently year after year is good management practice. Therefore this progress report was developed, but it includes a shorter list of performance measures than in previous years. Performance measures that have been completed or that do not provide practical information used for prioritizing ONMS actions have been left out.

Since 2008, the ONMS has continued to refine the methodology used to track progress on the four outcome-oriented measures for the ONMS. Condition reports, which include information on the status and trends of water quality, habitat, living resources and maritime archaeological

resources and the human activities that affect them, now form the basis for our understanding of the status of sanctuary resources. Condition reports were previously published for Stellwagen Bank, Fagatele Bay, Monitor, Gray's Reef, and Olympic Coast national marine sanctuaries. In FY09, four additional reports were published for Flower Garden Banks, Cordell Bank and Channel Islands national marine sanctuaries and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument.

Results of the FY09 Performance Evaluation Process

One of the seven PPMs tracked by OMB was completed in FY08, so six of them remain in progress. Of these six PPMs, four were found to be on track to meet their final targets, down from six out of seven in 2006. Two of the four outcome-oriented measures for the ONMS are behind target. These measures were purposely created to meet a highly stringent standard of success for marine conservation, particularly due to the interconnectivity of marine ecosystems and the difficulty in managing a special place in the face of threats outside of the ONMS jurisdiction. These performance measures were designed as long-term outcome measures with specific targets to be met every five years, until 2015; therefore, one should focus on the long-term trend measured in 5-year intervals rather than on variations from year-to-year.

The performance measures behind target include the habitat performance measure, which was on track in FY08 but has fallen behind, as well as the living marine resources performance measure. The decrease in performance for both of these performance measures is mainly due to a more rigorous assessment of sanctuary resources conducted during the preparation of site condition reports, rather than on a measurable decline in resource quality since last year. The issues of concern tend to result from external factors over which individual marine sanctuaries have limited control, including invasive species and continuing habitat loss. Fishing impacts also continue to be of concern at some of the individual sanctuaries. This merits attention since the outcome measures are the most direct tool used by the ONMS to show the difference it is making in protecting these special places.

Of the other four (non-PART) performance measures, two met their target for the year. The performance measure based on increasing the efficiency of on-the-water sanctuary projects (i.e., reducing the cost of days at sea) is showing strong savings thanks to a suite of new small vessels being used at various sanctuaries across the system. The performance measure on monitoring of marine zone effectiveness has already exceeded its target, showing a dedication by the ONMS to adequately monitor several types of marine zones within its jurisdiction. However, the ONMS is falling behind in two other program areas: volunteer efforts and management plan review.

A short description of the status of each performance measure follows.

Performance Measures Reports

1. Number of sites in which water quality, based on long-term monitoring data, is being maintained or improved

Targets:

Year	Target	Actual
1994	Baseline	1
2000	4	4
2005	6	6
2010	9	
2015	12	

FY09 Status: 9 sites; on track

Explanation:

The number of sites with maintained or improved water quality remained at nine in FY09. Water quality was shown to have been maintained or improved in the following sites: Stellwagen Bank (SBNMS), Monitor (MNMS), Gray's Reef (GRNMS), Florida Keys (FKNMS), Olympic Coast (OCNMS), Cordell Bank (CBNMS), Gulf of the Farallones (GFNMS), Channel Islands (CINMS), and Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale (HIHWNMS) national marine sanctuaries. Water quality was not maintained in the following sites: Flower Garden Banks (FGBNMS), Monterey Bay (MBNMS), Fagatele Bay (FBNMS) national marine sanctuaries and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (PMNM). It was undetermined at Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary (TBNMS). That sanctuary's condition report will be prepared in FY10. The indicators showing a declining trend in water quality are shown in the table below. The information used for reporting on this measure was collected following the protocol outlined in the tracking plan.

Site	Indicator	WQ Maintained or Improved?
CBNMS	No indication of change	Yes
CINMS	No indication of change	Yes
FBNMS	Water temperature increasing	No
FGBNMS	Impacts from freshwater intrusion events increased bleaching frequency, and ciguatera poisoning	No
FKNMS	No indication of change	Yes
GFNMS	No indication of change	Yes
GRNMS	No indication of change	Yes
HIHWNMS	No indication of change	Yes
MNMS	No indication of change	Yes
MBNMS	Contaminant and nutrient loading and algal	No

Site	Indicator	WQ Maintained or Improved?
	bloom frequency	
PMNM	Water temperature increasing	No
OCNMS	No indication of change	Yes
SBNMS	No indication of change	Yes
TBNMS	Undetermined	?

Currently, the performance measure is on track with targets for 2010 and 2015; with continued effort the ONMS may be able to continue meeting the targets, but it is likely that external factors will make this difficult for some sites. Water temperature changes, for example, may continue to cause bleaching at coral reef sites, and water quality improvements may require action on a scale beyond both the ONMS's funding and jurisdiction.

Action: *Continue*

The ONMS should continue to prioritize resource protection activities aimed at improving water quality. This measure is one of the outcome-based performance measures for the program, as well as being one of seven PART measures. Hence, while the ONMS may experience difficulties in keeping up with this measure, generally due to external factors over which we have little control, it is an essential part of the mission of the ONMS. Therefore, this measure should be maintained as is.

2. Number of sites in which habitat, based on long-term monitoring data, is being maintained or improved

Targets:

Year	Target	Actual
1994	Baseline	1
2000	4	4
2005	6	6
2010	9	
2015	12	

FY09 Status: 7 sites; behind schedule

Explanation: With the preparation of condition reports for most marine sanctuaries either completed or underway, a process that began two years ago, staff at each of the sites have worked with experts to conduct critical assessments of resource condition. With 10 reports complete and three in draft form, the number of sanctuaries reporting maintained or improving habitat conditions remained at seven, the same number as that for FY08. Habitat was reported to have been maintained or improved in the following sites: SBNMS, MNMS, GRNMS, FGBNMS, OCNMS, CINMS, and FBNMS. Habitat quality at the following sites has not been maintained or improved: FKNMS, GFNMS (estuarine environments only), MBNMS, HIHWNMS, and PMNM. TBNMS is not included in this performance measure. At CBNMS,

data were considered insufficient to rate this measure. The information used for reporting on this measure was collected following the protocol outlined in the tracking plan.

Site	Indicator	Habitat Maintained or Improved?
CBNMS	Undetermined	?
CINMS	State trawling ban and state/federal marine reserve network are protecting habitat	Yes
FBNMS	No indication of change	Yes
FGBNMS	No indication of change	Yes
FKNMS	Coral and seagrass loss	No
GFNMS	Siltation and invasive species in estuaries	No
GRNMS	No indication of change	Yes
HIHWNMS	Aquaculture and artificial reefs	No
MNMS	No indication of change	Yes
MBNMS	Alteration of estuarine habitats and contaminant loading	No
PMNM	Marine debris and coral disease	No
OCNMS	No indication of change	Yes
SBNMS	No indication of change	Yes
TBNMS	n/a	n/a

There were no changes in assessments of this measure between 2008 and 2009. Because habitat quality can strongly influence the likelihood of improving conditions for living marine resources, achieving the targets for habitat quality is important. Some of the factors affecting the indicators of decreasing habitat quality (e.g., habitat alteration, presence of artificial reefs and aquaculture facilities) could be managed to result in near-term improvements. Others, such as the presence of invasive species, disease incidence, and biodiversity changes, are much more difficult to deal with. Thus, the number of sanctuaries with maintained or improved conditions could be increased, but it is likely that the program will still find it a challenge to reach the 2015 target.

Action: Continue

The ONMS should continue to prioritize resource protection activities aimed at improving habitat. This measure is one of the outcome-based performance measures for the program, as well as being one of seven PART measures. Hence, while the ONMS may experience difficulties in keeping up with this measure due to external factors over which we have little control, it is an essential part of the mission of the ONMS and helps the program prioritize effort and investments. Therefore, this measure should be maintained as is.

3. Number of sites in which living marine resources (LMRs), based on long-term monitoring data, is being maintained or improved

Targets:

Year	Target	Actual
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1994	Baseline	1
2000	4	4
2005	6	6
2010	9	
2015	12	

FY09 Status: 2 sites; behind schedule

Explanation: The number of sites in which living marine resources have been maintained or improved remained at two in FY09, which is lower than the 2005 status which had six sites meeting the target. Living marine resources were reported to have been maintained or improved only in CBNMS and PMNM. The rest reported declining conditions for a variety of reasons. For eight of those sanctuaries, the presence of invasive species was cited as a primary reason for the rating. At sanctuaries containing coral reefs, diseases were cited. The FKNMS also noted biodiversity loss and poor seagrass condition, and GRNMS also reported the effects of regional fishing and a prior sponge mass mortality event. In HIHWNMS, the high number of entanglements of humpback whales is of increasing concern. The information used for reporting on this measure was collected following the protocol outlined in the tracking plan.

Site	Indicator	LMRs Maintained or Improved?
CBNMS	No indication of change	Yes
CINMS	Invasive species	No
FBNMS	Coral diseases	No
FGBNMS	Coral diseases	No
FKNMS	Biodiversity loss, disease, seagrass condition	No
GFNMS	Biodiversity changes, invasive species in estuaries	No
GRNMS	Regional overfishing, invasive species, sponge mortality	No
HIHWNMS	Entanglements	No
MNMS	Invasive species	No
MBNMS	Biodiversity loss, impacts of by-catch, domoic acid events	No
PMNM	No indication of change	Yes
OCNMS	Invasive species	No
SBNMS	Invasive species	No
TBNMS	Invasive species	No

During meetings with experts while preparing condition reports, a number of sanctuaries identified previously unknown or under-appreciated problems with living marine resources, resulting in greater concerns for their condition. The current status has, therefore, dropped below the 2005 target levels for living marine resources. It will take increasing effort for the ONMS to meet the targets, owing to the many external factors affecting sanctuary resources. These include the introduction of non-indigenous species and increasing levels of coral bleaching that may be

caused by changing regional temperature regimes. In addition, impacts of fishing practices such as the removal of biomass, fishing gear impacts on habitat, or by-catch of non-targeted species may affect marine living resources in sanctuaries. An enhanced effort will be required if the ONMS is to achieve the final 2015 target, including reaching out to partners who may have more control over some of the factors driving the issues.

Action: *Continue*

The ONMS should concentrate more effort into resource protection activities aimed at improving living marine resources. This measure is one of the outcome-based performance measures for the program, as well as being one of seven PART measures. Hence, while the ONMS may experience difficulties in keeping up with this measure due to external factors over which we have little control, it is an essential part of the mission of the ONMS and helps the program prioritize effort and investments. Therefore, this measure should be maintained as is.

4. By 2015, 100% of the sanctuary system adequately characterized

Targets:

Year	Target	Actual
2002	Baseline	55%
2004	70%	63%
2006	80%	85%
2008	90%	90%
2015	100%	

FY09 Status: 92%; on track

Explanation: All sites have made progress towards meeting this measure. The budget situation in the last two years has prevented progress in many aspects of this performance measure. However, five sites have completed their requirements, as described in the tracking plan. The remaining have several topic areas that will require attention before the 2015 target deadline. This requirement does not apply to PMNM.

Successful completion of this measure requires sites to develop and coordinate information on seven major topic areas relating to the natural, cultural and human dimension resources and processes of each sanctuary. The ONMS successfully met the FY06 target of 80% outlined by this performance measure, as well as the 90% target for FY08. Therefore, the current completion rate of 92% is on track with the needs of the ONMS. All sites invest in characterization related activities on an annual basis, and in most cases sites have data holdings in each of the relevant topic areas defined in this measure. A major contributor to the success of ONMS progress on this measure stems from the sanctuary condition reports and the biogeographic assessments completed by the Biogeography Team of NCCOS for seven sanctuaries (four additional ones are in progress). Several of the biogeographic projects contributing to this measure, such as those

for Olympic Coast and Fagatele Bay national marine sanctuaries, have been put on hold due to lack of funding.

To meet the next outlined target, the ONMS will need to address specific components of site characterization topic areas. The ONMS is currently working to identify the remaining information gaps for each sanctuary relative to the targets defined in this performance measure. This effort will enable sites to plan characterization activities that will move the program closer to meeting the planned targets in future reporting years.

Action: *Continue*

This performance measure is crucial to the ONMS because it is linked to a NOAA-wide Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measure as well as included in our PART. This performance measure is designed to ensure the ONMS meets the congressional requirement to adequately characterize the entire National Marine Sanctuary System. To date the ONMS is on target and the measure is proving to be an effective planning and management tool to keep ONMS investments in characterization activities on track and focused on addressing key program requirements. To meet the 2015 target of 100%, the ONMS will need to address specific components of site characterization topic areas.

5. By 2010, all education programs implemented in national marine sanctuaries will be assessed for effectiveness against stated program goals and objectives and National Science Education Standards.

Targets:

Year	Targets	Actual
2004	5%	Baseline
2006	25%	25%
2008	65%	65%
2010	100%	

FY09 Status: 65%; on track

Explanation: The ONMS has assessed the effectiveness for 65% of its education programs. While this number has not increased since FY08, the ONMS is on track to meet the final target of 100% in 2010. This year, the working group developed a reporting system to document education program evaluation at each site, which assists in the determination of the level and extent of evaluation currently being conducted.

Action: *Continue*

A training program has been initiated to build the capacity of each site when conducting evaluation.

6. By 2015, 100% of known historical, cultural and archaeological resources within each national marine sanctuary boundary will be inventoried within the NOAA's ARCH database

Target:

Year	Targets	Actual
2005	Baseline	0%
2006	10%	0%
2007	None	13%
2010	50%	
2015	100%	

FY09 Status: 67%; exceeded

Explanation: The revised NOAA's ARCH Archaeological Site Database was completed by Wayne Lusardi at Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary in FY09 and data entry was able to take place. Several sites recalculated their total Known Archaeological Sites and revised that number. Because of this activity, the percentage of Documented Sites increased. The FY08 total of Known Archaeological Sites for the ONMS was 339. In FY 2009 the total Known Archaeological Sites was calculated to be 416.

At the 2009 Maritime Heritage Program (MHP) meetings, the MHP Executive Council agreed to define "documented maritime heritage" for the purposes of the performance measure as "Known Archaeological Sites under the management of the ONMS that were entered into the NOAA's ARCH database." This PM did not presume any level of archaeological documentation, only that the physical site was known and had been entered into the database. Therefore, the FY09 total number of Documented Archaeological Sites is 280; this number results in 67.3% of all known archaeological resources in sanctuaries inventoried.

The following tables provide the number of **Known Archaeological Sites and Documented Archaeological Sites** by sanctuary:

ONMS Site	Known Archaeological Sites	Documented Archaeological Sites
PMNM	17	17
HIHWNMS+ PIR	87	87
FBNMS	0	0
SBNMS	38	38
TBNMS	50	50
CINMS	25	25
MBNMS	27	27

GFNMS	11	11
CBNMS	0	0
OCNMS	8	8
FKNMS	152	16
MNMS	1	1
GRNMS	0	0
FGBNM	0	0
Total =	416	280

The completion of the NOAA’s ARCH archaeological site database enabled documentation of Known Archaeological Sites. The database is intended to document Known Archaeological Sites and is not intended to be a comprehensive data management database for all of the ONMS archaeological resources. The sanctuaries have all developed their own databases that document their archaeological resources at a finer level. The discrepancy in the Florida Keys total of documented Known Sites does not reflect a lack of documentation by the site. The information is available and will be entered into the NOAA’s ARCH database in FY10.

Action: *Continue*

The ONMS is poised to reach the final target for this performance measure in FY10, after which time it will be discontinued.

7. By 2017, 100% of the marine zones or networks of zones in place in the ONMS have methods implemented to assess their effectiveness

Target:

Year	Target	Actual
2007	Baseline	30%
2010	50%	
2013	75%	
2017	100%	

FY09 Status: 81%; exceeded

Explanation: There are currently 23 different types of zones within the marine sanctuary system. Eleven sanctuaries have marine zones of some type established either under the NMSA or other legal mechanisms: SBNMS, FKNMS, FGBNMS, OCNMS, CBNMS, GFNMS, MBNMS, CINMS, HIHWMNS, PMNM, and FBNMS. TBNMS, MNMS, and GRNMS do not have marine zones and are not included in this measure. GRNMS, however, is likely to have a research only area within the next year.

This report considers only zones for which ONMS has primary responsibility for monitoring or actively participates in tracking effectiveness. Thus, for example, while fishing zone restrictions

apply to certain areas of Fagatele Bay NMS, management of that sanctuary does not involve active participation in monitoring the restrictions, so these zones are not included for that sanctuary in this report. Using these criteria, there are 25 zones in the national marine sanctuary system for which reporting is necessary (see shaded zones in table below.) 81% of the marine zones for which ONMS has primary responsibility are currently being monitored, which greatly exceeds the target of 50% by 2010.

Marine Zone Monitoring				
Region	Sanctuary	Zones	Sanctuary Monitoring	Designation by:
NE/GL	TB	-	n/a	-
	SB	GOM Closed Area	Y	NEFMC
	M	-	n/a	-
SE/GOM	GR	-	n/a	-
	FK	SPAs	Y	ONMS
	FK	Ecological Reserves	Y	ONMS
	FK	ATBA	Y	IMO
	FK	Research Only	Y	ONMS
	FK	Existing management areas	Y	
	FK	PSSA	*	IMO
	FK	Military	*	
	FGB	No Anchoring	Y	IMO
	FGB	No Activity	Y	MMS
	WC	OC	ATBA	Y
OC		Military	*	
OC		Overflight	N	ONMS
OC		EFH Closure Olympic 2	*	PFMC
CB		<50 fm invert no take	N	ONMS
CB		EFH closure - Cordell Bank <50 fathom - no bottom contact	* (same boundary as <50 fm)	PFMC
CB		EFH closure - Cordell Bank biogenic area - no trawl zone	*	PFMC
CB		Rockfish Conservation Areas	*	PFMC
GF		Overflight	Y	ONMS
GF		EFH	*	PFMC
GF		Rockfish Conservation Area	*	PFMC
GF		Area of special biological significance	Basis for other zones*	State
GF		Vessel Traffic Zone	Y	ONMS
GF		Seasonal Closure	Y	State
GF		No-Vessel Operation Area	N	State
MB	Overflight	Y	ONMS	

	MB	Personal water craft	Y	ONMS
	MB	Area of special biological significance	Y	RWQCP, SWQRB
	MB	Dredge material disposal zone	Y	ONMS
	MB	Jade collection	N	ONMS
	MB	EFH	*	PFMC
	MB	Rockfish Conservation Area	*	PFMC
	MB	Limited harvest	Y	CAF&G
	MB	Military	*	
	MB	No harvest	Y	CAF&G
	MB	Shark attraction prohibited	Y	ONMS
	MB	Recreational/State Beach	*	CA State Parks
	MB	Recreational	*	CA State Parks
	MB	Vessel Traffic Zone	Y	ONMS
	CI	Marine reserves (shallow)	Y	State
	CI	Limited harvest to 3 miles	Y	State
	CI	Overflight	Y	ONMS
	CI	Seabed Alteration Prohibited (not a zone, as of 2009, as regulation now extended to entire sanctuary)	n/a (as of 2009)	n/a
	CI	Vessel Traffic Zone	Y	IMO
	CI	No-Vessel Operation Area -Pelicans	Y	State
	CI	Cargo Vessel Exclusion	Y	ONMS
	CI	Federal Marine Reserves	Y	ONMS
	CI	No discharge (not a zone, as of 2009, as regulation now extended to entire sanctuary)	n/a (as of 2009)	n/a
	CI	One-Mile personal watercraft	Y	CINP
	CI	Personal water craft	Y	ONMS
Pac	HIHW	Overflight	N	MMPA?
	PMNM	SPAs	Y	Proclamation
	PMNM	ATBA	Y	IMO
	PMNM	Ecological Reserves	Y	Proclamation
	PMNM	PSSA	Y	IMO
	FB	Fishing zones	Y	OLE/DMWR
*	Indicates zones in which the responsibility for monitoring lies with another organization and that the sanctuary does not intend to monitor the zone.			
	Zones for which monitoring is either the responsibility of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries or ONMS is actively involved in monitoring or tracking effectiveness.			

Discontinued in 2009 as regulation was extended to entire sanctuary; thus the zone was eliminated.

Sanctuaries, along with partners, have successfully implemented a number of monitoring programs within many marine zones. The monitoring programs for the many types of zones established in marine sanctuaries come in the form of natural resource monitoring or enforcement by sanctuary staff and/or partners. Planning for additional monitoring has been underway for several years in the ONMS, as have attempts to promote sanctuaries as sentinel sites for long term monitoring by NOAA and other agencies. But funding shortfalls have limited the ability to implement monitoring that is fully adequate for all zones or other sanctuary areas. Funding remains a priority need to continue and to implement new and more comprehensive monitoring plans. More effort needs to be dedicated to this function of the ONMS.

Disposition: *Continue*

8. By 2010, increase by 25% the number of volunteer hours dedicated to ONMS science, public awareness, and resource protection activities.

Targets:

Year	Target	Actual
2006	Baseline (110,000 volunteer-hours)	95,180 volunteer-hours
2007	116,875 volunteer-hours (+6.25%)	94,640 volunteer-hours
2008	123,750 volunteer-hours (+12.5%)	97,938 volunteer-hours
2009	130,625 volunteer-hours (+18.75%)	111,127 volunteer-hours
2010	137,500 volunteer-hours (+25%)	

FY09 Status: 111,127 volunteer-hours (baseline); behind

Explanation: ONMS reported 111,127 volunteer-hours in FY09, an increase of over 13,000 hours from FY08. This represented an increase of 13% in volunteer hours in FY09 compared to only a 3.5% increase in FY 08. While the total hours in FY09 are still short of the target total hours, the rate of increase from FY08 to FY09 was double that of the expected rate of increase (13% increase in volunteer hours from FY08 to FY09 with only 6.25% per year expected in original baseline target projections). This performance measure is significant because it shows a transition from general public awareness to engaged public stewardship; the volunteers are members of the public or direct stakeholders who are taking an active role in sanctuary management or resource protection activities.

There was a significant increase in hours this year. About 11,000 of the additional hours can be attributed to two sites (PMNM and HIHWNMS) that were able to dramatically increase their volunteer hours last year. PMNM expanded teacher volunteer opportunities and also had increased sanctuary advisory council hours. HIHWNMS established a volunteer program on Oahu and increased existing opportunities on the other islands. Most other sites saw the number

of volunteer hours maintain or decrease slightly due to funding constraints. Flat or minor budget increases over the next few years will necessitate reexamining the goal of increasing the baseline by 25% by 2010.

Action: *Continue*

Despite the rapid growth in volunteer-hours in FY09, simply maintaining the level of volunteer activity over time is an ongoing challenge because of competing priorities within the purview of the ONMS mandate. In FY10, volunteer programs are likely to receive no additional financial support under the current budget scenario.

9. By 2010, decrease the average length of time to complete a final management plan to 36 months

A management plan review is considered **started** when the notice of intent is published in the Federal Register. A final management plan is considered **completed** when the notice of availability of the final management plan is published in the Federal Register.

Overall Target: Complete MPR in 36 months by 2010

FY09 Status: Behind

Explanation: The management plan reviews for TBNMS and FGBNMS were started in the fall of 2006. OCNMS MPR was started in September 2008, and MNMS MPR started in December 2008.

TBNMS published a final management plan July 2009, and has met the target for the performance measure. FGBNMS, on the other hand, has not yet published a draft management plan. This MPR is addressing two very politically and technically complex issues: boundary expansion and marine reserves, which both require significant coordination with other federal management agencies as well as public involvement. The ONMS follows an extensive public process when reviewing management plans, which sometimes results in delays to address some sensitive topics that arose during public scoping and consultation periods. Additional time can also be necessary because most of the management plan reviews are the first of their kind for the individual sanctuaries, and therefore require more than a review but often an overhaul of the management plan that may be 15 years old or more.

In addition, FGBNMS operations were impacted by Hurricane Ike, which hit Galveston in September 2008. The draft management plan is not likely until May 2010. OCNMS has completed the public scoping phase, and are currently following a detailed timeline to ensure completion of the final management plan within 36 months. The MNMS has completed scoping and has been following a detailed schedule with a draft management plan anticipated in spring 2010.

Following the MPR retreat in Beaufort in October 2005, the ONMS focused on better pre-planning for the upcoming MPRs. The MPRs for all the sites currently in review were initiated with specific deadlines for all phases of the MPR to ensure completion within 36 months.

TBNMS developed a management plan with no regulatory revisions (“non-regulatory management plan”), which streamlined the MPR process and enabled the publication of a final management plan within a reasonable timeframe. OCNMS and MNMS are following a similar strategy to complete the management plan review with no or minor regulatory changes. This is to avoid the type of delays in the development and clearance of major regulatory actions which were typical of the earlier management plan reviews. FGBNMS is developing a management plan that includes a few regulatory changes (although the boundary expansion will be considered separately in October 2010.) However, considerable time was spent agreeing on this strategy for FGBNMS, therefore lengthening the MPR beyond the 36 months timeframe.

The problematic length of the management plan reviews was noted by the Department of Commerce Inspector General (IG) during a thorough review of the ONMS in 2008, and recommendations were made by the IG to meet the 36-months target. Therefore it is crucial that the ONMS continues to invest a significant amount of effort in MPR to ensure completion of this measure for the sites currently undergoing MPR and those that will follow in the future.

Disposition: *Continue*

There is concern about the progress on the FGBNMS MPR, and it is unlikely that it will be completed within the timeframe targeted for this performance measure. The completion of an MPR process requires significant staff time on both the site and the headquarters levels; therefore, prioritization for completing these reviews requires continued support from site and headquarters as necessary to meet this measure.

10. By 2011, operational “Days at Sea” (DAS) on ONMS small boats will increase six-fold with less than a 10% increase in total DAS costs.

Target:

Year	Targets	Actual
2005	Baseline	130 DAS
2007	260 DAS	n/a
2009	520 DAS	482 DAS
2011	780 DAS	

FY09 Status: 482 DAS; on track

Explanation: In FY09 the ONMS DAS and daily operating costs for the largest small boats in the ONMS fleet were the following:

Small Boat	Days at Sea (DAS)	Operating Cost per Day
AUK	79 DAS	\$2,600
FULMAR	159 DAS	\$2,400
SHEARWATER	129 DAS	\$2,600
MANTA	59 DAS	\$4,000
SRV-X	56 DAS	\$3600

	Total: 482	Average: \$3,040/Day
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Discussion:

The baseline of 130 days at sea (DAS) for this efficiency performance measure was calculated by adding up the number of DAS in 2005 on NOAA ships in east and west coast sanctuaries. The corresponding cost for DAS on NOAA ships in 2009 was approximately \$8,350/day. The average cost of operating ONMS small boats is \$3,040/day, which is about 60% less than the average NOAA ship daily cost. The ONMS has been developing its small boat program in order to provide boat support for sanctuaries operations independently from NOAA ship support, which affords not only more flexibility but also more cost efficiency, and to provide services to other NOAA programs with on-the-water needs.

The number of DAS decreased from the FY08 DAS by 27 days. The decrease number of days is due to level funded budgets, which has not allowed the program to fully utilize the boats. With continued level funding, the number of days at sea will continue to decrease due to increasing operational, personnel, and maintenance costs. The average daily cost in FY09 compared to FY08 increased by \$337/day. However, the increase was also influenced by the daily operating cost of the new vessels MANTA and the SRV-X which are significantly larger than the AUK, FULMAR, and SHEARWATER. While ONMS continues to strive towards meeting the 2011 target for this performance measure, the gain has been significant to date. In addition, one cannot discount the overall days at sea savings of more than \$5,000 when utilizing ONMS small boats instead of NOAA ship support.

Disposition: *Continue*

The tracking of the performance metrics is still a moving target because the ONMS is refining its method for measuring the operating cost for vessels. Nevertheless, the ONMS continues to make progress in reaching the 2011 target for this performance measure; therefore, it should continue to be tracked unchanged.